

Engaging a New Generation of Philanthropists:

FINDINGS FROM THE PAY IT FORWARD
STUDENT PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE



THE SILLERMAN CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHILANTHROPY
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AUTHORS: Jodi Benenson, Erika Moldow, Ph.D., Andrew Hahn, Ph.D.

ABOUT THE SILLERMAN CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHILANTHROPY

The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy, established in 2008, builds upon the policy and social justice expertise of the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University. The Center develops and diffuses knowledge by conducting original research on social justice philanthropy, supporting doctoral students, offering *Practicing Philanthropy* and *Social Justice Philanthropy* courses, running a graduate internship program that places students in foundations, coordinating an annual competition to stimulate innovation and creative thinking in philanthropy on college campuses, and sponsoring public events. Sillerman Center staff members consult with foundations, sit on foundation and nonprofit boards, and write a monthly blog on philanthropy for *The Huffington Post*.



ABOUT OHIO CAMPUS COMPACT

Ohio Campus Compact is a statewide nonprofit coalition of college and university presidents and their campuses working to promote civic purposes of higher education. Ohio Campus Compact envisions Ohio colleges and universities as centers of civic engagement and renewal where co-curricular and curricular learning, teaching, and scholarship advance the public good and prepare students for active citizenship and democratic participation. Its mission is to provide statewide leadership in mobilizing resources, services, and partnerships that help Ohio colleges and universities deepen their ability to educate students for civic and social responsibility and to improve community life.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 2

Introduction 4

Pay it Forward 6

Overview of Research Approach 8

Key Findings 10

Conclusion 15

Appendix A: Study Methodology 16

Appendix B: Analyses 17

References 23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, indications of changes and declines in civic engagement have spurred academic- and community-based conversations concerning how to engage the next generation of philanthropists. While higher education institutions have historically served as venues to develop civically engaged students through service-learning and non-curricular programming, many schools have begun to invite students to engage in philanthropy by awarding grants to local nonprofits. This report focuses on an emerging trend in higher education called *student philanthropy*, an experiential learning approach where students study social issues in the community and make decisions about distributing funds to nonprofit organizations. Previous research in the field of student philanthropy has revealed promising results: those enrolled in student philanthropy courses have shown a greater awareness of social problems and nonprofits, a heightened sense of responsibility to help others in need, and a greater likelihood to give their time and money in the future to support their community. However, little is known about the ways previous philanthropy experiences of students and components of student philanthropy courses may explain these outcomes.

This report examines students enrolled in student philanthropy courses through Pay it Forward, an initiative of the Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio Campus Compacts that seeks to develop a new generation of philanthropists through infusing the practice of philanthropy as a core component of college coursework. Pay it Forward courses are taught across diverse academic disciplines at more than 30 universities in Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio. In each

course students research social needs and nonprofit organizations, invite a number of nonprofits to apply for grants through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, evaluate applications and proposals, and make collective decisions about which organizations to fund.

Campus Compact has partnered with The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy at Brandeis University to examine the impact on students enrolled in courses through the Pay it Forward student philanthropy initiative. The Sillerman Center analyzed 1,628 end-of-course surveys from students participating in 96 philanthropy courses across 31 universities from January 2010-August 2011.

This report asks three key questions about the Pay it Forward course:

- What are the prior philanthropic experiences of Pay it Forward participants?
- What features of a Pay it Forward course predict student confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge?
- What aspects of a Pay it Forward course predict changes in students' plans to donate money to, volunteer in, and otherwise support their communities?

Key findings from the report include:

- **FINDING 1: College students enter the Pay it Forward courses with a variety of prior experiences in the nonprofit sector, but many students have not been previously exposed to philanthropy.** While many students enrolled in the Pay it Forward courses

had prior experiences with giving and volunteering, not all have engaged in philanthropy early on in life. About half of survey respondents had never discussed their parents/guardians' volunteer or philanthropic work with them.

- **FINDING 2: While the goals of Pay it Forward are consistent across courses, the types of activities offered, students' investment of time, and students' level of engagement varied.** Most respondents had direct contact with nonprofits, did research into issue areas, and developed selection criteria for grants, but varied in terms of overall course engagement. Although most students in the courses spent less than half of their of their course time on the philanthropy component of the course, the majority of students made at least one visit to a nonprofit they were considering for a grant award.
- **FINDING 3: Student respondents' level of engagement, investment of time, and participation in hands-on activities during the course are significant predictors of confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge.** When controlling for prior philanthropic experiences, our analyses suggest that specific course components and activities – most significantly, their level of engagement in the course, investment of time, and participation in hands-on activities – do make a difference in students' confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge.
- **FINDING 4: Overall course engagement, rather than specific course activities, predicts changes in student respondents' plans to donate money**

to, volunteer in, and otherwise support their communities. This finding suggests that overall engagement is more significant than any single component of the course. In addition, the course gave students a greater understanding of the importance of nonprofit organizations, tools for selecting worthy organizations, and a recognition that they can contribute both through donating funds and through giving their time.

This research contributes to our emerging understanding of the ways student philanthropy courses, particularly through the Pay it Forward initiative, can most effectively engage a new generation of philanthropists. The findings from this report suggest that what occurs in a Pay it Forward course matters and is predictive of students' confidence in their philanthropic skills and changes in their plans to donate, volunteer, and support their communities. This study can inform the ways instructors design the curricular components of student philanthropy courses to balance disciplinary learning objectives with the engaging, hands-on philanthropy components. Future research and continued funding of philanthropy courses in higher education will bring answers to new questions about the practice of teaching student philanthropy.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, indications of changes and declines in civic engagement have spurred academic- and community-based conversations concerning how to engage the next generation of philanthropists.¹ Because higher education institutions serve as venues for young people to catalyze ideas about social justice and become engaged in their communities via service and scholarship,² one response has been to integrate the teaching of philanthropy into higher education. Since the late 1990s, a growing number of higher education institutions have begun implementing educational programs and course-based opportunities for students to become engaged in philanthropy.³ The purpose of these hands-on experiential philanthropy initiatives is not only to introduce college students to the practice of philanthropy, but also to encourage students to remain philanthropic throughout their lives.

This report focuses on an emerging trend in higher education called student philanthropy. Like service-learning, student philanthropy⁴ is an experiential education strategy that integrates academic study and

community service to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities, but it also includes a philanthropy component.⁵ Within student philanthropy courses, both undergraduate and graduate students study social issues in the community and make decisions about distributing funds to nonprofit organizations.

Specifically, this report examines Pay it Forward, an initiative of Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio Campus Compacts⁶ that seeks to develop a new generation of philanthropists by infusing the practice of philanthropy as a core component of college coursework. Pay it Forward courses are taught across diverse disciplines at more than 30 universities in Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio. In each Pay it Forward course students research social needs and nonprofit organizations, invite a number of nonprofits to apply for grants through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, evaluate applications and proposals, and make collective decisions about which organizations to fund.⁷ Pay it Forward takes a *direct giving* approach,⁸ where a class

1. Cornelius et al. (2008), Perry (2005), Putnam (2000), Saratovsky & Feldmann (2013), Van Pelt et al. (2011)

2. Colby et al. (2007)

3. Ashcraft (2002), Campbell (In press), Falk (2002), Irvin (2005), Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project (2012), McDonald & Olberding (2011), Olberding et al. (2010), Payton & Moody (2008), Wish & Mirabella (1998)

4. This definition was informed by Olberding (2009) and Campbell (In press)

5. Astin & Sax (1998), Cohen & Kinsey (1994), Olberding (2009)

6. Campus Compact is a coalition of college and university presidents that seeks to advance the public purpose of higher education by deepening their ability to improve community life and educating students for civic responsibility.

7. Olberding (2011), Pay it Forward (2013)

8. Olberding et al. (2010)

is provided with a certain amount of funds donated by foundations, corporations, universities, the government, or local funders and students make giving decisions that directly fund nonprofits.⁹ Each Pay it Forward course receives \$5,000 to award to nonprofit organizations. The hope is that this student philanthropy experience will inspire students to engage in lifelong philanthropy and volunteer to improve the lives of others.

Campus Compact has partnered with The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy at Brandeis University to examine the impact on students enrolled in courses through the Pay it Forward student philanthropy initiative. The Sillerman Center has analyzed 1,628 end-of-course surveys from students participating in 96 philanthropy courses across 31 universities from January 2010-August 2011.

Early findings in the field of study philanthropy have been promising. Courses have been linked to students' increased awareness of social problems and the role of nonprofits, a heightened sense of responsibility to help others in need, and a greater investment of their time and money to support their community.¹⁰ We know little, however, about the ways previous philanthropic experiences of students and components of student philanthropy courses may explain these outcomes.

Previous research in the field of philanthropy finds that parental role modeling, conversations about giving, and exposure to the nonprofit sector are related to whether youth decide to give or volunteer in the future.¹¹ In addition, the service-learning literature suggests that the quality of a service-learning experience and degree to which a course provides active, hands-on activity has been linked to the outcomes of student participants.¹² This report explores the ways prior philanthropic experiences and features of Pay it Forward courses predict students' understanding of philanthropy and their plans to give to, volunteer in, and support their communities.

9. Models of student philanthropy can take either a *direct giving* or an *indirect giving* approach (Olberding, 2009; Olberding et al., 2010). In the *indirect giving* model, students evaluate grant proposals and a board of directors from a local organization makes the final funding decisions (Olberding, 2009).

10. Ahmed & Olberding (2007/2008), Olberding (2012)

11. Astin et al. (1999), Eisenberg et al. (2006), Ottoni-Wilhelm et al. (2011)

12. Billig et al. (2005), Billig (2009), Spring et al. (2006)

PAY IT FORWARD

Pay it Forward is a \$1.4 million initiative of Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio Campus Compacts that seeks to develop a new generation of philanthropists through an innovative course-based service-learning program for college students.¹³

GOALS: The primary goals of Pay it Forward are to address critical needs in communities through student-led grantmaking and to provide service-learning opportunities to bridge campuses and communities.

STUDENTS: Between January 2010 and August 2011, Pay it Forward engaged 2,215 college students in 110 courses across 33 campuses in Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio.¹⁴ This study focuses on surveys received from 1,628 of these students in 96 courses across 31 campuses.

FUNDING: Pay it Forward is sponsored by Ohio Campus Compact and its 2010-2011 funding was made possible through funding from the Learn and Serve grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).¹⁵

COURSES: Pay it Forward courses occur in a variety of disciplines, departments, and organizational units.¹⁶ While courses are often taught in business/management and human services settings, they also occur in dozens of other areas including art/design, health, and criminal justice. Pay it Forward instructors can teach these courses individually or with another instructor. Some Pay it Forward courses are multi-semester courses.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: One requirement of the Pay it Forward initiative is that instructors infuse the philanthropy project into existing courses rather than create new courses. Another requirement is that students must volunteer at least 15 hours with a local nonprofit during the course term.

AWARDS: Taking the *direct giving* approach to student philanthropy, each course receives \$5,000 to award to nonprofit organizations in the community. Each course gives awards of \$4,500 and has \$500 for administrative costs.¹⁷

13. See Pay it Forward (2013)

14. Since this report was written, Pay it Forward has reached over 3,000 college students in 144 courses across Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio.

15. Beginning in Fall 2011, with the loss of funding from CNCS, the amount provided to each class to give to nonprofits decreased to \$2,000. The majority of campuses found additional funds or used student fundraising to increase the funding available. A 100% match was required from each campus and at least nine campuses located funds to sustain courses for 2012-2013. Through local foundation funding, Ohio Campus Compact started a Pay it Forward initiative in Licking County, Ohio, with seven courses on two campuses during Spring 2013. Ohio Campus Compact is continuing local Pay it Forward initiatives in 2013-2014.

16. Campbell (In press)

17. Administrative costs primarily go toward travel costs for student transportation to organizations and end of semester award ceremonies.

TABLE 1:
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PAY IT FORWARD PARTICIPANTS

| VARIABLE NAME | N | PERCENT |
|--|------|---------|
| GENDER* | | |
| Male | 534 | 34.3% |
| Female | 1022 | 65.6% |
| MEMBER OF FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY | | |
| Yes | 1019 | 66.1% |
| No | 523 | 33.9% |
| PARENT EDUCATION** | | |
| Less than high school diploma or GED | 27 | 1.7% |
| High school diploma or GED | 310 | 20.0% |
| Some college | 304 | 19.6% |
| Associate's degree | 145 | 9.4% |
| Bachelor's degree | 409 | 26.4% |
| Master's degree | 243 | 15.7% |
| Doctorate or terminal degree (e.g., MD, JD, PhD) | 111 | 7.2% |
| RACE/ETHNICITY*** | | |
| White/Caucasian | 1276 | 81.8% |
| Black/African American | 177 | 11.4% |
| Biracial/ethnic or Multiracial/ethnic | 81 | 10.0% |
| Latino/Hispanic | 75 | 4.8% |
| Asian American/Asian/Pacific Islander | 40 | 2.6% |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | 27 | 1.7% |
| Other**** | 35 | 3.8% |
| <p>* In analyses, gender was broken down by male and female, as only two students (or .1%) identified as transgender.</p> <p>** In analyses, parent education was broken into whether the student's parent/guardian has a Bachelor's degree or higher (N=763 or 49.3%), or does not have a Bachelor's degree or higher (N=786 or 50.7%). If the student's parents/guardians have different levels of education, the student was asked to select the highest level of education.</p> <p>*** Respondents were asked to select all applicable categories. In the analyses, race was broken into two categories, white/Caucasian and not white/Caucasian.</p> <p>**** Other responses included Brazilian, Middle Eastern, South Asian, West African, and Xicano.</p> | | |

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH APPROACH

This study asks three overarching questions:

- What are the prior philanthropic experiences of Pay it Forward participants?
- What features of a Pay it Forward course predict student confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge?
- What aspects of a Pay it Forward course predict changes in students' plans to donate money to, volunteer in, and otherwise support their communities?

The Sillerman Center and Ohio Campus Compact worked collaboratively to design an end-of-course Pay it Forward survey to address these questions. From 2010-2011, Ohio Campus Compact collected surveys from 1,628 students in 96 courses across 31 schools. The Sillerman Center conducted all analyses. See Appendix A for more information about the survey sample, response rate, administration, and instrument.

The following summarizes the survey questions and analysis:

- To understand students' prior philanthropic experiences, we asked about their backgrounds, affiliations, and actual experiences. Eight measures were included to measure prior experience: whether students had volunteered in a nonprofit organization, made a donation to a nonprofit organization, participated in service-learning in college, participated in service-learning in high school, taken a service-learning course before, worked (for pay) at a nonprofit

organization, taken a course in philanthropy before, and discussed their parents/guardians' own volunteer or philanthropic work with them.

- We asked about students' investment of time and engagement in course activities, including: participation in nine different philanthropic course activities, the number of visits they made to a nonprofit being considered for a grant award, the percentage of in-class time devoted to the philanthropy project, and their level of engagement in the course.
- We asked students 17 questions about their confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge at the end of the course. Specifically, students were asked about their confidence in identifying issues and challenges facing the local community, articulating a community need, and measuring the impact of nonprofit programming on community needs.

Using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis, we controlled for students' demographic characteristics and prior philanthropic experiences to identify which aspects of the course are significant predictors of students' overall confidence in these areas.

- Finally, we asked students to consider how likely they were to participate in various philanthropic and volunteer activities before taking the Pay it Forward course, and to then reflect on their plans for participating in these activities after taking the course. We asked 16 questions¹⁸ covering plans for future

18. In our analyses we examined eight of these questions.

giving, future volunteering, future conversations about giving, and future work in the nonprofit sector.

We first calculated whether there was a change in students' likelihood of participating in philanthropic, volunteer, or work activities after taking the Pay it Forward course. Next, using logistic regression analysis, we controlled for students' demographic characteristics and prior philanthropic experiences to identify which aspects of the course predict a change in students' expectations for future philanthropic, volunteer, and work activities.

- We also sought to better understand how students' perspectives of philanthropy and giving changed after taking the course. The survey asked an open-ended question: "How has the course changed *how* you will give in future, if at all?" Each answer was coded according to students' responses and emerging themes.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The study offers several strengths in its design, data, and analysis, but characteristics of its methodology limit our ability to generalize the findings. First, since the survey was administered at the end of the course and collected from students who voluntarily offered their feedback, the responses may be different than they would have been if all students who enrolled in the courses had completed surveys. Second, the study relies on self-reported data and is open to social desirability bias – a tendency to answer questions the way respondents think the researchers want them to answer – which can occur

when participants are asked questions about giving money or time.¹⁹ Third, the study relies on students' predictions about giving and volunteering in the future, rather than measuring their actual changes in behavior over time. Fourth, students self-selected into Pay it Forward courses and may be different in important ways from students who choose not to enroll. Finally, because Pay it Forward courses are offered in three Midwest states, the findings may not be generalizable to all colleges or universities in the United States.

19. Rooney et al. (2004)

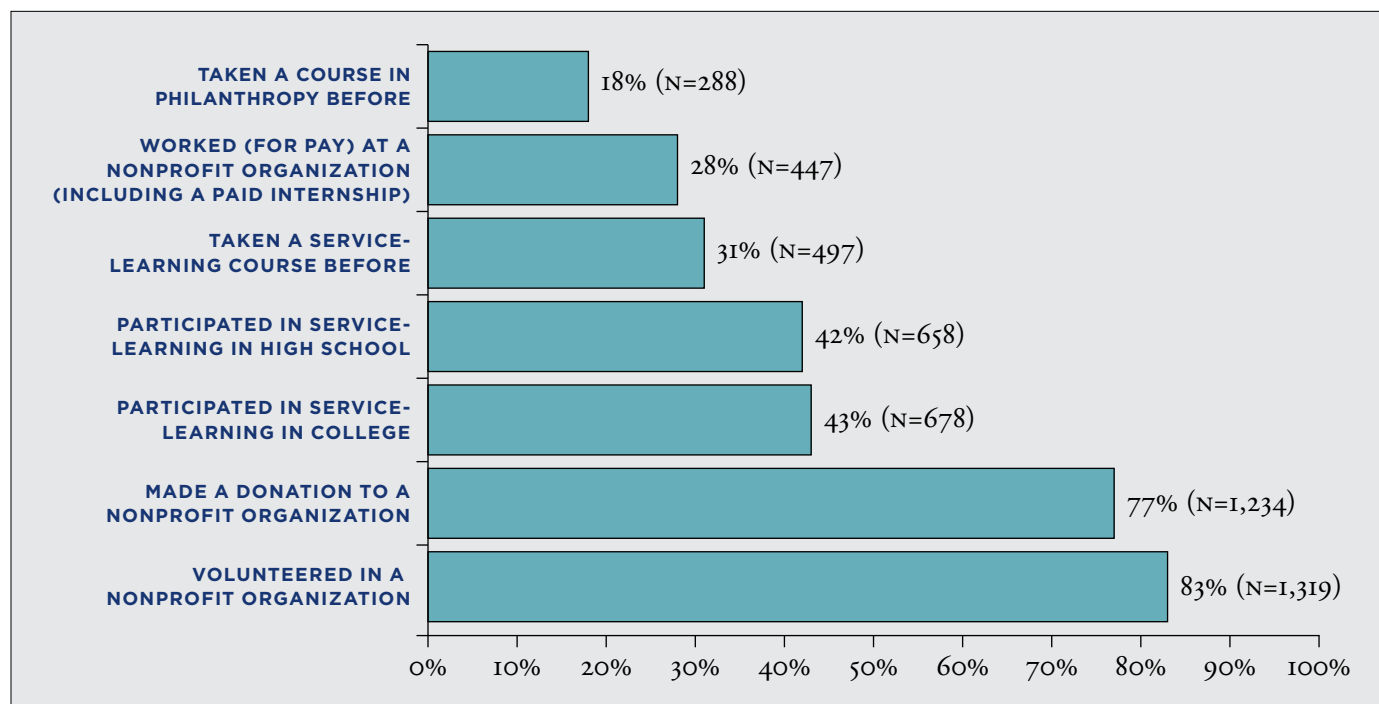
KEY FINDINGS

FINDING 1: College students enter the Pay it Forward courses with a variety of prior experiences in the nonprofit sector, but many students have not been previously exposed to philanthropy.

Although this was the first philanthropy course for 82% of Pay it Forward students responding to the survey, a large percentage had prior nonprofit experiences through volunteering (83%) or donating (77%) to nonprofit

organizations. While respondents' level of volunteering was higher than the national average (which was 27% for college students in 2011)²⁰, strong variation in prior experience is evident. Fewer students had prior service-learning experience in college (43%), high school (42%), or through a course (31%). About 28% had worked (for pay) at a nonprofit organization.²¹

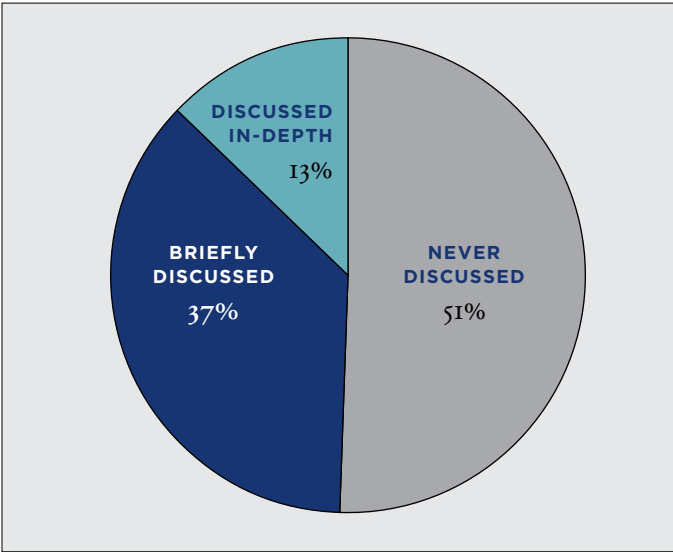
**FIGURE 1:
STUDENT PRIOR EXPERIENCES IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR**



20. CNCS (2011). CNCS defines college students as individuals aged 16-24 years old who are enrolled in college at the time of the survey.

21. In our analyses, three measures of prior philanthropic experiences are used: taken a course in philanthropy before, participated in service-learning in high school, and made a donation to a nonprofit organization. These measures were selected based on findings from existing research and preliminary analyses.

FIGURE 2:
PRIOR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PARENTS/
GUARDIANS' VOLUNTEER OR PHILANTHROPIC
WORK (N=1,585)

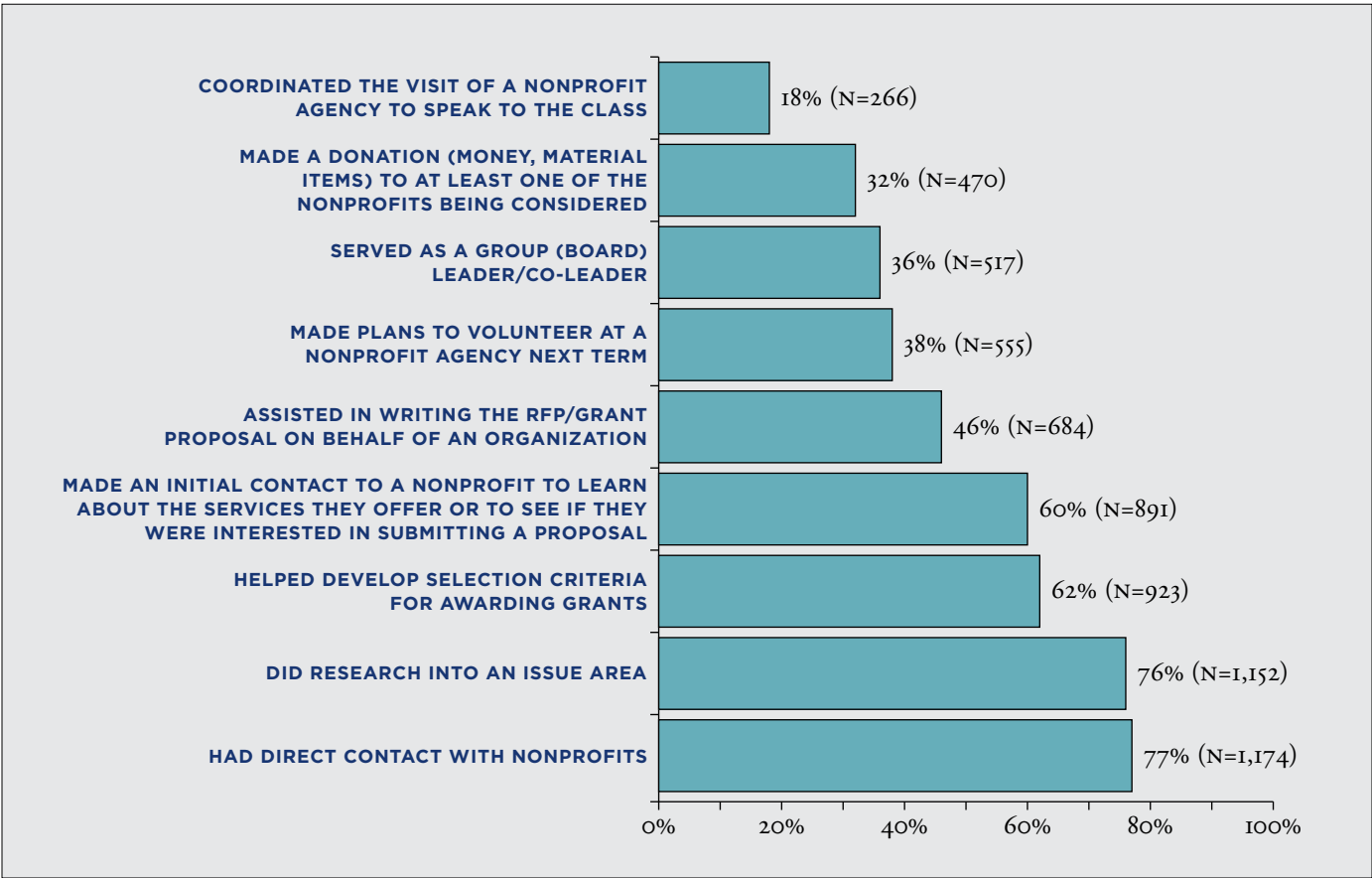


The survey also asked respondents whether they had previously discussed their parents/ guardians' volunteer or philanthropic work with them. About half (51%) of survey respondents had *never* discussed their parents/ guardians' volunteer or philanthropic work with them. However, 37% had discussed their parents/guardians' volunteer or philanthropic work with them *briefly*, and 13% had discussed it *in depth*.²²

FINDING 2: While the goals of Pay it Forward are consistent across courses, the types of activities offered, students' investment of time, and students' level of engagement varied.

Because each Pay it Forward course was integrated into preexisting curricula, activities offered and the focus on philanthropy varied. Most respondents had direct contact with nonprofits (77%), did research into issue areas (76%), and developed selection criteria for grants (62%). Fewer students served as a group leader or co-leader (36%), made a donation to at least one of

FIGURE 3:
PAY IT FORWARD COURSE ACTIVITIES



22. In analyses, prior discussions with parents/guardians about their philanthropic/volunteer activity was broken into two categories: in-depth or briefly/never.

TABLE 2:
VISITS TO NONPROFIT BEING CONSIDERED
FOR GRANT AWARD (N=1,524)

| NUMBER OF VISITS | PERCENT |
|------------------|---------|
| 0 | 21% |
| 1 | 24% |
| 2-3 | 25% |
| 4+ | 30% |

the nonprofits being considered for an award (32%), or coordinated the visit of a nonprofit agency to speak to the class (18%).

To inform their grantmaking decisions, many students visited the organizations they were considering for a grant award.²³ As seen in Table 2, while just over half (55%) of students made two or more visits to a nonprofit being considered for a grant, nearly half (45%) visited an organization only once or not at all.

Because the Pay it Forward initiative was infused into existing courses, it was rare for instructors to devote most of their course time to the philanthropy component. Table 3 shows that the majority (63%) of students spent less than half of in-class time on the philanthropy component of the course. While 11% of respondents spent over 75% of their time on philanthropy, the amount of time invested in the philanthropy component clearly varied across courses.

The survey also asked students seven questions about their level of engagement in the Pay it Forward course. Students were asked to select on a five-point scale (ranging from “Practically Never” to “Very Often”) how often they had these experiences in the course. As seen in Table 4, a large percentage of respondents felt that they made a contribution and had the opportunity to learn by doing “Fairly Often” or “Very Often” during the course. Other types of engagement, such as having

TABLE 3:
IN-CLASS TIME SPENT ON PHILANTHROPY
COMPONENT (N=1,564)

| TIME ON PROJECT | PERCENT |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Less than 25% of time | 23% |
| 25-49% of time | 40% |
| 50-75% of time | 26% |
| More than 75% of time | 11% |

variety of tasks to do at each site, did not occur as often for students during the course. Taken together, these seven questions became our overall scale of engagement.

FINDING 3: Student respondents’ level of engagement, investment of time, and participation in hands-on activities during the course are significant predictors of confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge.

Because the quality of a service-learning experience has been previously linked to the outcomes of participants,²⁴ we examined the relationship between what occurs in a Pay it Forward course and students’ confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge at the end of the course. Our analyses suggest that specific course components *do* make a difference in students’ confidence in their ability to identify community needs and measure the impact of nonprofits in meeting those needs. The following factors matter:

- 1. LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT.** Respondents’ overall engagement is the best predictor of their confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge in our analysis. This finding emphasizes the importance of allowing students to have the opportunity to learn by doing, make a contribution, and have a variety of tasks as a part of the course.
- 2. INVESTMENT OF TIME.** Our analyses show a positive relationship between the percent of time

23. Students visited an average of three different nonprofits throughout the Pay it Forward course.

24. Spring et al. (2006)

TABLE 4:
COURSE ENGAGEMENT

| TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT | PRACTICALLY NEVER | ONCE IN A WHILE | SOMETIMES | FAIRLY OFTEN | VERY OFTEN |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Felt I made a contribution (N=1,551) | 3% | 7% | 18% | 32% | 42% |
| Had opportunity to learn by doing (N=1,553) | 2% | 7% | 16% | 35% | 40% |
| Had freedom to develop and use own ideas (N=1,559) | 4% | 8% | 20% | 35% | 34% |
| Had real responsibilities (N=1,559) | 3% | 9% | 21% | 37% | 31% |
| Made important decisions (N=1,558) | 5% | 9% | 23% | 36% | 27% |
| Had challenging tasks (N=1,553) | 5% | 10% | 27% | 36% | 23% |
| Had variety of tasks to do at each site (N=1,547) | 11% | 13% | 25% | 29% | 23% |

students invest in the philanthropy component of the course and students' confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge. This finding may motivate instructors to increase the amount of time spent on the philanthropy project during the course, as only one-third of courses spent more than half of their time on the philanthropy project.

3. EXPERIENTIAL, HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES.

Several activities fitting this description were positively linked to confidence, including whether students had direct contact with nonprofits, did research into issue areas, assisted in writing a grant proposal on behalf of an organization, and served as group leaders. This finding is consistent with previous service-learning research, which consistently suggests that active, hands-on activities positively support student learning.²⁵

(See the Appendix B for specific confidence questions, measurement of confidence, and Table B for the OLS regression results.)

FINDING 4: Overall course engagement, rather than specific course activities, predicts changes in student respondents' plans to donate money to, volunteer in, and otherwise support their communities.

Our final step was to explore whether and how participation in Pay it Forward influenced respondents' future philanthropic plans. We asked students whether their future plans to donate, volunteer, have conversations about giving, and work in the nonprofit sector changed after this course. Our analyses suggest that overall engagement in a Pay it Forward course is more significant than any single component of the course in shifting respondents' philanthropic, volunteer, and work plans.²⁶

25. Billig et al. (2005), Billig (2009)

26. These findings are consistent with previous research about student engagement and service-learning: that a higher level of engagement in the course matters. See Billig et al. (2005) and Celio et al. (2011).

While specific course activities such as coordinating a visit of a nonprofit to speak to the class, helping develop selection criteria for awarding grants, making plans to volunteer next term, and assisting in the writing of a grant proposal were found to be significant, they were not found to be significant across all outcomes.

(See Tables C and D in Appendix B for the specific change score and logistic regression results.)

We also examined the course's influence on future plans by asking an open-ended survey question: "How has this course changed *how* you will give in the future, if at all?" Students said that the course gave them a greater understanding of the importance of nonprofit organizations, tools for selecting worthy organizations, and a recognition that they can contribute both through donating funds and giving their time. For many, Pay it Forward courses introduced students to the importance of giving funds to nonprofit organizations.

- *It never occurred to me before to give to charity or a nonprofit. But now that I'm aware of the struggles nonprofits encounter, if I am ever in the position where I have money to give, I certainly will.*
- *Because of this course I am aware of more organizations and more areas of need. My wider scope of knowledge will allow me to support organizations whose cause I'm passionate about. Passion, both mine and the staff of the organization, is a very important part of deciding to give.*
- *Because of how much more I now know about nonprofits, I am interested in researching more and finding out what they do, but I will definitely be a long-time advocate of the organization that my group chose for the project.*

Some students said that through this course, they developed a better understanding of what to look for in an organization when deciding where to donate.

- *I am not in a good financial status currently to give but down the road I would like to give to agencies in my local area. I now know what to look for in a good organization.*
- *I realize the needs of the nonprofit sector more. Also, before I would have researched the agency I would give money to but would have most likely only given to homeless shelters or food banks. I am now more likely to give to other agencies dealing with other issues too.*

Pay it Forward courses also gave students a new understanding that they could give not only through funds, but importantly, through their time.

- *As I don't have any money to donate, I will donate more of my time to agencies and more time to research nonprofits' needs in my area.*
- *This course has changed the idea I had that volunteering stops after high school. You may not always be able to donate money, but you can donate your time. This course reminded me of that, and made me want to keep volunteering even after this course is done.*

CONCLUSION

Pay it Forward is an approach to student philanthropy that seeks to develop a new generation of philanthropists. Through an innovative course-based service-learning program, students engage in philanthropic experiences that broaden their perspectives about giving and volunteering. This report highlights the importance of considering students' prior philanthropic experiences and the components of student philanthropy courses when examining the effects of these courses on student philanthropic outcomes. Our findings have two implications for the field of student philanthropy.

First, we find that although many students had prior experiences with giving and volunteering, over half had never discussed their parent/guardians' volunteer or philanthropic work with them. While parents, organizations, and neighborhoods can influence whether youth engage in philanthropic activities, it is clear that not all students receive opportunities to engage with philanthropy early on in life. Future research has an opportunity to delve further into whether participation in a student philanthropy course has differential effects on students based on characteristics such as socioeconomic status, race, gender, and previous exposure to philanthropy. Such research will allow us to better understand which students benefit most from these courses.

Second, this study makes a pedagogical contribution toward the ways instructors can design courses to most effectively engage a new generation of philanthropists. When controlling for prior philanthropic experiences, our analyses suggest that specific course components and activities – most significantly, their level of

engagement in the course, investment of time, and participation in hands-on activities – do make a difference in students' confidence about their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge. We also learn that the level of course engagement, rather than specific course activities, predicts changes in students' plans to donate money to, volunteer in, and otherwise support their communities. This suggests that overall engagement is more significant than any single component of the course. These findings highlight the need for careful consideration of balancing disciplinary content with the philanthropy component of the course. If course instructors seek to improve outcomes in terms of students' confidence in philanthropy, they must recognize the time and attention required in developing the course curriculum and integrate identified activities – such as providing students the opportunity to serve as group leaders, conduct research into issue areas, write a grant proposal for an organization, and have direct contact with nonprofits – into their syllabus.

Overall, our research suggests that what occurs in a Pay it Forward course matters. While the core goals of Pay it Forward are consistent across courses, students' experiences in the course vary considerably. Future research and continued funding of student philanthropy courses in higher education will not only bring answers to new questions about the practice of teaching student philanthropy, but will also enable a new generation to strengthen and invest in their communities.

APPENDIX A:

STUDY METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE AND RESPONSE RATE

Student data were gathered through anonymous end-of-course surveys collected between January 2010 and August 2011. All students enrolled in Pay it Forward courses were asked to take a survey after taking the course. As seen in Table A, 1,628 end-of-course-surveys from students participating in 96 philanthropy courses across 31 higher education institutes in Kentucky, Michigan, and Ohio are included in our sample. The response rate of participating students, courses, and colleges/universities are 73%, 87%, and 94%, respectively.

ADMINISTRATION

Ohio Campus Compact oversaw all aspects of survey administration. Participating instructors administered surveys at the end of the course. Students could complete the survey on paper or online. Paper surveys were mailed to The Sillerman Center to be entered into

a database and analyzed, and online responses went directly into a database. The database was cleaned and organized by The Sillerman Center.

INSTRUMENT

The survey instrument was jointly developed by Ohio Campus Compact and The Sillerman Center, and was informed by previous survey instruments used to study philanthropy and philanthropy education, which includes the Students4Giving 2009-2010 survey, the Great Cities Great Service (GCGS) program college student survey, the Campus Connects Student Philanthropy Project end-of-semester survey, and Conrad and Hedin's (1991) community service checklist. The survey asks about student characteristics, prior philanthropic experience, course activities and experiences, confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge after taking the course, and perception of course impact after taking the course.

TABLE A:
RESPONSE RATE OF PAY IT FORWARD STUDENTS, COURSES, AND SCHOOLS
(JANUARY 2010-AUGUST 2011)

| | TOTAL PARTICIPANTS | SURVEYS RECEIVED | RESPONSE RATE |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Students | 2,215 | 1,628 | 73% |
| Courses | 110 | 96 | 87% |
| Colleges/Universities | 33 | 31 | 94% |

APPENDIX B:

ANALYSES

Quantitative analyses were run to examine which aspects of the Pay it Forward courses are significant predictors of overall confidence and participation in future giving, volunteering, and work in the nonprofit sector. Correlations were run to ensure that multicollinearity²⁷ would not prevent using prior philanthropy experiences or course activities in the model. Because of the low correlations between all the variables, all were included in the model.

CONFIDENCE IN PHILANTHROPIC SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND KNOWLEDGE

One dependent measure used in the study was a confidence scale. The survey asked students about their confidence in their philanthropic skills, abilities, and knowledge. Students were asked to rate their level of confidence (on a scale ranging from “Not at all Confident” to “Very Confident”) in 17 statements about confidence. Examples of these statements include:

- Knowledge of emerging trends in philanthropy and fundraising.
- How to build partnerships with leaders in the community.
- How to identify issues and challenges facing local communities.
- The role of the nonprofit sector in the local community.
- How to measure the impact of nonprofit programming on community needs.

- How to develop an RFP to the nonprofit community that reflects giving priorities.
- How to gather and analyze information from partnerships and/or site visits with nonprofits to inform decisions.
- To articulate points of view different from my own.
- To articulate a community/educational need through public presentation, grantwriting, or other fundraising strategy.

These questions factored into a single scale of confidence. The numeric scale ranges from 1-4. The Cronbach’s alpha for the scale was .94, which indicates a very high level of internal consistency for the scale within the sample. Because all questions factored well onto this one scale, it was used for this study.

Using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis, we controlled for students’ demographic characteristics and prior philanthropic experiences to identify which aspects of the course are significant predictors of students’ overall confidence. As seen in Table B, having direct contact with nonprofits, doing research into an issue area, assisting in writing the grant proposal on behalf of an organization, serving as a group leader/co-leader, the percentage of class time spent on the philanthropy component of the course, and the overall level of engagement are all significant predictors of students’ overall confidence. Other significant predictors include gender, taking a prior course in philanthropy, participating in service-learning in high school, and making a donation to a nonprofit organization.

27. Multicollinearity is the occurrence of several variables in a multiple regression model that are closely related to one another.

TABLE B:
ORDINARY LEAST SQUARES (OLS) REGRESSION RESULTS, PAY IT FORWARD COURSE PREDICTORS OF CONFIDENCE IN PHILANTHROPIC SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND KNOWLEDGE (N=1,557)

| VARIABLE NAME | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR |
|--|----------------|------------|
| DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS | | |
| Gender | *-0.064 | 0.029 |
| Faith | 0.003 | 0.028 |
| Parent education | -0.034 | 0.027 |
| Race | -0.069 | 0.036 |
| PRIOR PHILANTHROPIC EXPERIENCES | | |
| Taken a course in philanthropy before | ***0.15 | 0.036 |
| Participated in service-learning in high school | *0.059 | 0.027 |
| Made a donation to a nonprofit organization | *0.067 | 0.032 |
| Parent/guardian discussed philanthropy in-depth or briefly/never | 0.041 | 0.041 |
| COURSE ACTIVITIES | | |
| Had direct contact with nonprofits | ***0.146 | 0.034 |
| Did research into an issue area | **0.089 | 0.033 |
| Helped develop selection criteria for awarding grants | 0.042 | 0.029 |
| Made an initial contact to nonprofit to learn about the services they offer or to see if they were interested in submitting a proposal | -0.002 | 0.029 |
| Assisted in writing the RFP/grant proposal on behalf of an organization | *0.063 | 0.028 |
| Made plans to volunteer at a nonprofit next term | 0.040 | 0.030 |
| Served as a group (board) leader/co-leader | *0.064 | 0.030 |
| Made a donation (money, material items) to at least one nonprofit being considered | 0.022 | 0.030 |
| Coordinated the visit of a nonprofit to speak to the class | -0.042 | 0.038 |
| OTHER COURSE COMPONENTS | | |
| Number of visits made to a nonprofit being considered for an award | 0.004 | 0.004 |
| Percent of in-class time spent on philanthropy project | **0.05 | 0.015 |
| Engagement scale | ***0.22 | 0.017 |
| Constant | ***1.552 | 0.760 |
| * = Significant at $p \leq .05$, ** = Significant at $p \leq .01$, *** = Significant at $p \leq .001$, 2-tailed Model summary: $R = .539$, $R^2 = .290$ + = B is an unstandardized coefficient | | |

FUTURE PHILANTHROPIC, VOLUNTEER, AND WORK ACTIVITY

A second dependent measure was derived from 16 questions about students’ perceptions of future giving, future volunteering, future conversations about philanthropy, and future work in the nonprofit sector or community. The survey asked students to report (on a scale ranging from “Not at all Likely” to “Very Likely”) how likely they were to engage in each activity at the beginning of the course, and how likely they were to do so at the end of the course.

We first calculated whether there was an increase, decrease, or no change in the likelihood of student respondents’ participating in philanthropic, volunteer, or community activities after taking the Pay it Forward

course. Table C highlights change scores from the eight questions we used in our analyses about giving and volunteering, conversations about giving, and work in the nonprofit sector. These findings demonstrate that the majority of student respondents experienced no change and an increase in likelihood of participating in philanthropic, volunteer, or community activities.

Next, we coded the dependent measure into two categories, decrease/no change and increase. Using logistic regression analysis, we again controlled for students’ demographic characteristics and prior philanthropic experiences to identify which aspects of the course predict a change in perceptions of students’ future philanthropic, volunteer, and work in the nonprofit sector or community. Table D highlights the results of the eight logistic regression analyses.

TABLE C:
CHANGE SCORE RESULTS (BY PERCENT)

| | SURVEY ITEM | N | DECREASE | NO CHANGE | INCREASE |
|------------------------------|---|-------|----------|-----------|----------|
| GIVING AND VOLUNTEERING | Give money to local nonprofits after graduation | 1,473 | 2% | 51% | 47% |
| | Volunteer after graduation | 1,454 | 2% | 52% | 46% |
| | Seek out nonprofits to give money to that reflect my values | 1,468 | 3% | 51% | 46% |
| | Give money to nonprofits that request money | 1,477 | 3% | 55% | 42% |
| CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GIVING | Talk with peers about giving | 1,471 | 2% | 48% | 50% |
| | Talk with family about giving | 1,447 | 2% | 50% | 48% |
| WORK IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR | Pursue work in the nonprofit sector after graduation | 1,475 | 3% | 53% | 44% |
| | Seek employment in an organization or corporation that values volunteer service | 1,467 | 2% | 56% | 42% |

TABLE D:
LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS, PAY IT FORWARD COURSE PREDICTORS
OF CHANGE IN PHILANTHROPIC, VOLUNTEER, AND WORK PLANS

| INDEPENDENT VARIABLES | GIVING AND VOLUNTEERING | | | | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----------------------------|------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| | GIVE MONEY TO LOCAL NONPROFITS AFTER GRADUATION | | VOLUNTEER AFTER GRADUATION | | SEEK OUT NONPROFITS TO GIVE MONEY TO THAT REFLECT MY VALUES | | GIVE MONEY TO NONPROFITS THAT REQUEST MONEY | |
| | N=1,473 | | N=1,454 | | N=1,468 | | N=1,477 | |
| | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR |
| DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | | |
| Gender | 0.081 | 0.128 | -0.115 | 0.128 | 0.032 | 0.127 | 0.084 | 0.129 |
| Faith | -0.156 | 0.126 | -0.039 | 0.127 | 0.122 | 0.125 | **0.319 | 0.129 |
| Parent education | 0.027 | 0.120 | -0.038 | 0.121 | 0.045 | 0.119 | -0.138 | 0.121 |
| Race | 0.061 | 0.159 | 0.039 | 0.160 | *0.307 | 0.159 | -0.170 | 0.159 |
| PRIOR PHILANTHROPIC EXPERIENCES | | | | | | | | |
| Taken a course in philanthropy before | ** -0.449 | 0.163 | -0.292 | 0.162 | *** -0.518 | 0.162 | -0.315 | 0.164 |
| Participated in service-learning in high school | 0.108 | 0.121 | 0.007 | 0.122 | 0.127 | 0.121 | -0.010 | 0.123 |
| Made a donation to a nonprofit organization | ** -0.393 | 0.144 | * -0.293 | 0.144 | -0.126 | 0.142 | ** -0.368 | 0.144 |
| Parent/guardian discussed philanthropy in-depth or briefly/never | ** -0.551 | 0.189 | *** -0.634 | 0.192 | -0.332 | 0.185 | ** -0.491 | 0.193 |
| COURSE ACTIVITIES | | | | | | | | |
| Had direct contact with nonprofits | 0.184 | 0.153 | 0.070 | 0.155 | 0.263 | 0.152 | 0.088 | 0.156 |
| Did research into an issue area | -0.079 | 0.150 | 0.275 | 0.152 | -0.127 | 0.148 | 0.095 | 0.151 |
| Helped develop selection criteria for awarding grants | -0.040 | 0.129 | * -0.272 | 0.130 | -0.085 | 0.128 | -0.129 | 0.130 |
| Made an initial contact to nonprofit to learn about the services they offer or to see if they were interested in submitting a proposal | 0.083 | 0.129 | 0.161 | 0.130 | -0.032 | 0.128 | 0.039 | 0.131 |
| Assisted in writing the RFP/grant proposal on behalf of an organization | 0.155 | 0.125 | 0.014 | 0.126 | 0.101 | 0.124 | 0.143 | 0.126 |
| Made plans to volunteer at a nonprofit next term | -0.072 | 0.133 | 0.109 | 0.134 | 0.057 | 0.132 | 0.249 | 0.134 |
| Served as a group (board) leader/co-leader | -0.044 | 0.133 | 0.036 | 0.133 | 0.129 | 0.132 | -0.154 | 0.134 |
| Made a donation (money, material items) to at least one nonprofit being considered | 0.125 | 0.133 | 0.189 | 0.134 | 0.119 | 0.132 | 0.058 | 0.134 |
| Coordinated the visit of a nonprofit to speak to the class | 0.064 | 0.167 | -0.205 | 0.169 | -0.036 | 0.166 | -0.111 | 0.170 |
| OTHER COURSE COMPONENTS | | | | | | | | |
| Number of visits made to a nonprofit being considered for an award | 0.007 | 0.018 | 0.029 | 0.018 | -0.005 | 0.018 | -0.002 | 0.018 |
| Percent of in-class time spent on philanthropy project | 0.030 | 0.067 | -0.024 | 0.067 | -0.039 | 0.066 | 0.129 | 0.067 |
| Engagement scale | ***0.273 | 0.077 | **0.227 | 0.078 | **0.195 | 0.076 | **0.226 | 0.078 |
| Constant | ** -1.05 | 0.343 | ** -0.918 | 0.343 | *** -1.15 | 0.341 | *** -1.327 | 0.348 |

* = Significant at $p \leq .05$, ** = Significant at $p \leq .01$, *** = Significant at $p \leq .001$, 2-tailed
 Dependent variables were coded into change/no change

| CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GIVING | | | | WORK IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR | | | |
|------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|--|------------|---|------------|
| TALK WITH PEERS ABOUT GIVING | | TALK WITH FAMILY ABOUT GIVING | | PURSUE WORK IN THE NONPROFIT SECTOR AFTER GRADUATION | | SEEK EMPLOYMENT IN AN ORGANIZATION OR CORPORATION THAT VALUES VOLUNTEER SERVICE | |
| N=1,471 | | N=1,447 | | N=1,475 | | N=1,467 | |
| B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR | B ⁺ | STD. ERROR |
| | | | | | | | |
| -0.005 | 0.127 | 0.012 | 0.128 | *0.266 | 0.129 | 0.031 | 0.129 |
| 0.191 | 0.126 | -0.041 | 0.126 | 0.001 | 0.127 | -0.057 | 0.127 |
| -0.026 | 0.120 | -0.146 | 0.120 | 0.123 | 0.121 | 0.028 | 0.121 |
| 0.070 | 0.159 | -0.058 | 0.159 | -0.001 | 0.160 | 0.105 | 0.162 |
| | | | | | | | |
| -0.186 | 0.161 | -0.017 | 0.160 | -0.239 | 0.163 | *-0.399 | 0.166 |
| 0.109 | 0.121 | -0.014 | 0.122 | -0.007 | 0.122 | -0.097 | 0.123 |
| ***-0.518 | 0.145 | -0.176 | 0.144 | -0.102 | 0.145 | -0.124 | 0.145 |
| -0.303 | 0.184 | *-0.432 | 0.186 | -0.125 | 0.184 | -0.323 | 0.190 |
| | | | | | | | |
| 0.248 | 0.153 | 0.111 | 0.153 | 0.028 | 0.155 | 0.100 | 0.155 |
| 0.212 | 0.149 | 0.163 | 0.149 | -0.021 | 0.151 | -0.165 | 0.150 |
| 0.121 | 0.129 | 0.023 | 0.129 | -0.091 | 0.130 | -0.092 | 0.130 |
| -0.233 | 0.129 | *-0.257 | 0.129 | 0.050 | 0.130 | -0.095 | 0.130 |
| -0.106 | 0.125 | 0.070 | 0.125 | **0.321 | 0.125 | 0.151 | 0.126 |
| 0.126 | 0.132 | 0.251 | 0.133 | **0.339 | 0.133 | **0.364 | 0.134 |
| -0.055 | 0.133 | -0.116 | 0.134 | 0.029 | 0.133 | 0.075 | 0.134 |
| 0.209 | 0.133 | 0.119 | 0.133 | 0.053 | 0.134 | 0.135 | 0.134 |
| *-0.343 | 0.168 | *-0.381 | 0.168 | -0.236 | 0.170 | *-0.379 | 0.173 |
| | | | | | | | |
| -0.014 | 0.018 | 0.029 | 0.018 | -0.001 | 0.018 | -0.002 | 0.018 |
| 0.073 | 0.067 | 0.050 | 0.067 | -0.009 | 0.067 | -0.051 | 0.067 |
| ***0.267 | 0.077 | **0.213 | 0.077 | ***0.317 | 0.079 | ***0.330 | 0.079 |
| ***-1.19 | 0.343 | **0.87 | 0.340 | ***-1.797 | 0.353 | ***-1.345 | 0.350 |

+ = B is an unstandardized coefficient

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

While the quantitative data can provide information about which aspects of the course may affect a student's change in likelihood to give, volunteer, or work in the nonprofit sector after the Pay it Forward course, it is necessary to gather qualitative data to better understand these changes. For this report we examined one survey question that asked students: "How has the course changed *how* you will give in the future, if at all?" Each answer was coded and sorted based on themes that emerged in the data. These themes reflect whether a change was reported in the following areas: giving (time or money), knowledge of an issue area, recognition of community needs, understanding of how to do research into organizations, and no change/unsure. Through this open-ended survey question we learned that for many students, there is a positive relationship between participation in a Pay it Forward course and a change in student's outlook on giving and knowledge about grantmaking.

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THE HELLER SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT**

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

415 SOUTH STREET, MS 035

WALTHAM, MA 02454-9110

PHONE: (781) 736-3772

WEB: SILLERMANCENTER.BRANDEIS.EDU